

Fruits and Veggies Across the Curriculum

Background, resources and activities for teaching children and youth



Diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of some types of cancer and other chronic diseases.

Program Background

The 5 A Day for Better Health Program is a nationwide initiative to increase Americans' consumption of fruits and vegetables to promote good health and reduce the risk of some cancers and other chronic diseases. The Program's strength comes from the combined efforts and resources of its partners including:

- American Cancer Society
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Council of 5 A Day Coordinators
- National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity
- National Cancer Institute
- Produce for Better Health Foundation
- Produce Marketing Association
- United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association
- United States Department of Agriculture



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Health Benefits

Fruits and vegetables are low in fat and rich in fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables may help maintain:

- Lower risk of some cancers
- Healthy heart
- Healthy immune system
- Cholesterol levels that are already healthy
- Healthy aging
- Memory function
- Urinary tract health
- Vision health
- Strong bones and teeth

Recommendations

Eating lots of fruits and veggies every day is a key element of MyPyramid.gov, a part of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. **The amount for each school-age child varies by age, sex, and activity level. The ranges are:**

- ▶ For boys, 2½ to 6½ cups per day
- ▶ For girls, 2½ to 5 cups per day
- ▶ For specific recommendations for your child, visit <http://www.mypyramid.gov> or ask the 5 A Day Program for a copy of **How Many Fruits and Vegetables Do Boys/Girls Need?**

Because too much fruit juice may lead to tooth decay and overweight, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting fruit juice intake to:

- ▶ 4 -6 ounces per day for 1-6 year olds
- ▶ 8-12 ounces per day for 7-18 year olds

Fact Sheet for Parents

"More Peas, Please!", a ready-to-copy fact sheet, provides parents of young children with ideas and recipes to help kids eat more fruits and vegetables. Request a copy by phone or e-mail.

Lending Library

Teaching materials in the DPHS Lending Library can enhance your programming. Items range from music CDs to videos to curricula with recipes, handouts, and activity ideas. Here's a sampling:

- **5 A Day Bingo** (game)
- **5 A Day Power Play School Idea and Resource Kit**
- **Color Way Creative Pockets Kit**
- **Color Way Game**
- **Fruit and Veggie Recall** (game)
- ▶ Materials can be delivered to your local NH public library.
- ▶ For the complete **5 A Day Lending Library list**, call the NH 5 A Day Program at 603-271-4830.
- ▶ To **reserve / borrow** items, call the DPHS Library directly at 603-271-0562.

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Frequently Asked Questions

What Does a Tennis Ball Have to Do with Fruits and Vegetables?

Answer: 1 cup of fruit or vegetable is the same size as a tennis ball. Here are a few examples.

- Apple: 1 small
- Banana: 1 large
- Broccoli: 3 5-inch spears
- Carrots: 2 medium
- Grapefruit: 1 medium
- Peach: 1 large
- Potato: 1 medium



Leafy Vegetables

- Raw spinach, kale, collards, mustard greens, and lettuce are leafy vegetables.
- Because they have a lot of space between the leaves, 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked leafy vegetables counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of your daily intake.

Dried Fruit

- Raisins are dried grapes. Prunes are dried plums. Other dried fruits include apricots, dates and dried apples, mango and pineapple.
- As fruit dries, it gets smaller. For that reason, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.
- ▶ Call for a free copy of *What Does a Tennis Ball Have to Do with Fruits and Vegetables?*

What Counts?

Fresh, frozen, canned, jarred, and dried fruits and vegetables all count (except coconuts, olives, and nuts) as long as:

- There is no added fat.
- There is no added sugar (sucrose, glucose, dextrose, fructose, maltose, lactose, sorbitol, mannitol, honey, corn syrup, corn syrup solids or molasses).

Juice should be 100% juice or juice concentrate without added fat or sugar.



What About Coconuts, Olives, and Nuts?

- Because they are high in fat, coconuts, olives, and nuts cannot be promoted in association with 5 A Day.
- Products and recipes with coconut, olives, or nuts can be promoted in association with 5 A Day if they meet the 5 A Day Recipe Criteria.

Start a Fruit and Veggie Team

Working with a team increases creativity and strengthens outcomes. Ask others to join your 5 A Day team to help you plan 5 A Day promotions at your school.

- Teachers (see departments on pages 3-4)
- School nurse/health educator
- School food service director / personnel
- UNH Cooperative Extension
- Parents, grandparents, PTO, PTA
- Community dietitians – try the hospital's outpatient clinic or community education department
- Public librarian and school librarian
- Children's clubs like 4-H and scouts
- College students from the nutrition, dietetics, family and consumer science, nursing, and education departments

What's a 5 A Day Recipe?

An official 5 A Day recipe:

- Must contribute at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit and/or vegetable per serving.
- May not contain more than
 - 30% of calories from fat
 - 10% of calories from saturated fat
 - 100 mg of cholesterol per serving
 - 480 mg of sodium per serving



Fruits and Veggies Online: Recipes and Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/5aday>

Produce for Better Health Foundation

<http://pbhfoundation.org>

Dole Food Company

<http://www.dole5aday.com>

US Department of Agriculture

<http://www.nal.usda.gov>

Quantity Recipe Cookbook

Here's a great resource to share with your school food service. All 40 fruit and vegetable based recipes conform to USDA recipe format.

<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/NHP>



Activity Ideas



Arithmetic

- Calculate the nutrients per serving (vitamin A, vitamin C, fiber, etc.); price per serving.
- How much time do you save by microwaving instead of baking one potato? two potatoes?
- Find fruits and vegetables for one day that add up to the daily recommendation for vitamins A and C, and fiber.

Consumer Skills

- Design a food label for a fresh fruit or vegetable. Include a Nutrition Facts panel, an ingredient list, and cooking instructions.
- Compare fresh, instant, frozen, and canned potatoes for grams of fat and cost per serving. Compare chips and fries, too.
- Which is the better buy – fresh, canned, or frozen corn? Use labels, empty containers, store flyers, and cash register tapes for current prices.
- Hold a “blind” taste test of canned fruits. Can students identify the name-brand and the store brand?
- What are good menu choices for a picnic? Can fruits and vegetables spoil?
- ▶ Ask a local grocery store to host a class visit. Ask students to identify how many of the store’s departments have fruits and vegetables. Borrow *5 A Day Supermarket Tours and Adopt-A-School Programs* from the Lending Library.
- ▶ Borrow the educationally enhanced edition of *Supersize Me!* from the Lending Library (page 1).



Cooking

- Host a taste test.
- Ask school food service staff to demonstrate their equipment.
- Try a recipe from another country.
- Offer a “24 Karat Luncheon” with carrot sticks, carrot soup, and carrot cake.
- Demonstrate a fruit and veggie recipe with older students as the presenters.



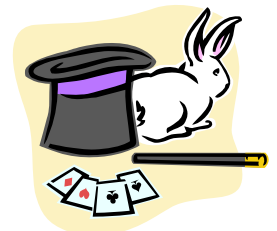
History, Geography and Culture

- What produce do we eat that was unknown to 15th century Europeans? What produce was found in the Americas? Africa? Asia?
- Where do fruits and vegetables grow? What climate features are critical? (Seed catalogs are a good resource.) What inventions made it possible to transport produce?
- Use Spanish 5 A Day materials in a Spanish class.
- Search for this festival on the Internet – the Feast of Radishes (December 23, in Oaxaca, Mexico). Find a way you can celebrate fruits and vegetables at your school.



Language, Music and Theater Arts

- Ask your librarian or a bookstore about stories, riddles, poetry, and music about fruits, vegetables, farms, gardens, orchards, shopping, cooking, eating, physical activity, and taking a challenge.
- Name a fruit or vegetable for every letter of the alphabet.
- Sponsor a writing contest – essays, poetry, short stories or skits.
- Hold a fruit and vegetable spelling bee.
- Describe a tropical fruit to someone who has never tasted it. Convince them to try.
- Write a jingle for a fruit and veggie PSA (public service announcement). “Air” it as a school announcement.
- Develop a magic show that features fruits and vegetables instead of rabbits and doves.
- ▶ E-mail or call the 5 A Day Program for a copy of:
 - *Fun Websites for Kids*
 - *5 A Day Book List*
- ▶ Borrow a CD from the Lending Library (page 1):
 - *5 A Day Rap and Jammin’ Songs* (with lyrics for all 10 songs)
 - *Groovin’ Foods Music CD*
 - *Smart Fruit and Veggie Songs Music CD*
 - *Veggie Power Music CD*



Physical Activity

- **Beanbag Games** Use fruit and veggie beanbags in games.
- **Team Names** Name teams for fruits and veggies that are fuzzy; shiny; purple; high in fiber; vitamin A or C; a cabbage-family vegetable.
- **Imagination** Imitate a growing seed, an apple tree during a storm; a cherry tree being visited by birds; an ear of corn being picked, husked, boiled, and eaten!
- **Produce Relay** Have players use a spoon to balance increasingly bigger fruits and veggies – a grape, an apricot, an orange and a potato.
- **Fruit Basket Upset** Form a circle and sit on the floor. Have each student pick a fruit name. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the center. The child in the center calls the names of two or more fruits. The students with those names get up and run to exchange places before the caller gets their spot. The one without a spot is the new caller. If the caller says "Fruit Basket Upset," everyone changes places.
- **Beans, Beans, Corn** (Duck, Duck, Goose) Form a circle. Sit on the floor. "It" walks around the circle saying "beans, beans, beans,..." until s/he taps someone and says "corn." Then the two players run in opposite directions, trying to get back to the empty space. Whoever does not get a space is the new "it."
- **The Talking Turnip** (Mother May I). Use active commands like, "The Talking Rutabaga says play tennis, jump rope, run in place, swim, tap your shoulders, eat a carrot, or plant a garden."
- **Raining on the Orchard** Form a circle. Leader stands in the center facing one person and rubs his/her hands together. As the leader slowly turns in place, the circle gradually joins in. Repeat with louder actions – snapping fingers, slapping thighs, stamping feet! Then, reverse steps until the storm ends.
- ▶ Dance to your favorite fruit and vegetable tunes! Borrow CD's from the Library (page 1).
 - **5 A Day Rap and Jammin' Songs**
 - **Groovin' Foods Music CD**
 - **Smart Fruit and Veggie Songs Music CD**
 - **Veggie Power! Music CD**
- ▶ For more information on physical activity and why it's so important for children to be active, contact KidPower!, a program that encourages physical activity in children, KidPower@dhhs.state.nh.us.



Political Science

Vote for your favorite fruit and vegetable. Learn that every vote counts – set up a fruit and vegetable ballot. Invite adults to participate. Dovetail this event with town meeting days, voting day, old home days. This makes a great media event – invite the press!



- Learn about write-in ballots.
- Set up caucuses.
- Establish "platforms" addressing color, flavor, vitamins A and C, fiber, and more.
- ▶ Call for a ballot and a copy of *It's an election year . run a produce campaign!*

Science

- Plant a garden. Ask our office for a copy of *Resources for Promoting 5 A Day*. Seed catalogs are a good source of photos and growing information. Plan a garden with produce rich in fiber, and vitamins A and C. Include a few cabbage-family vegetables. Or, plan a pizza garden!
- Take a field trip to a greenhouse or farm.
- Research the health benefits of eating produce.
- Name some produce items that grow on trees and in the ground. Which are roots, leaves, seedpods, seeds, stems, fruits?
- Learn how to turn red cabbage blue.
- Research the ripening process.



Visual Arts



- Explore the portrayal of produce in art as a way to learn about different artists, styles, and media including fabric.
- Design fruit and veggie hats, placemats, magnets, and bulletin boards.
- Study the colors and textures of produce. Try to portray them with a drawing, painting or collage.

How About a Challenge?

Challenge family, friends or another class to . . .

- Eat more fruits and vegetables and do 30 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Taste a new fruit or veggie daily for a week.
- Try new fruit or vegetable recipe.
- Learn the name of a new fruit or vegetable.

